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REPORTER

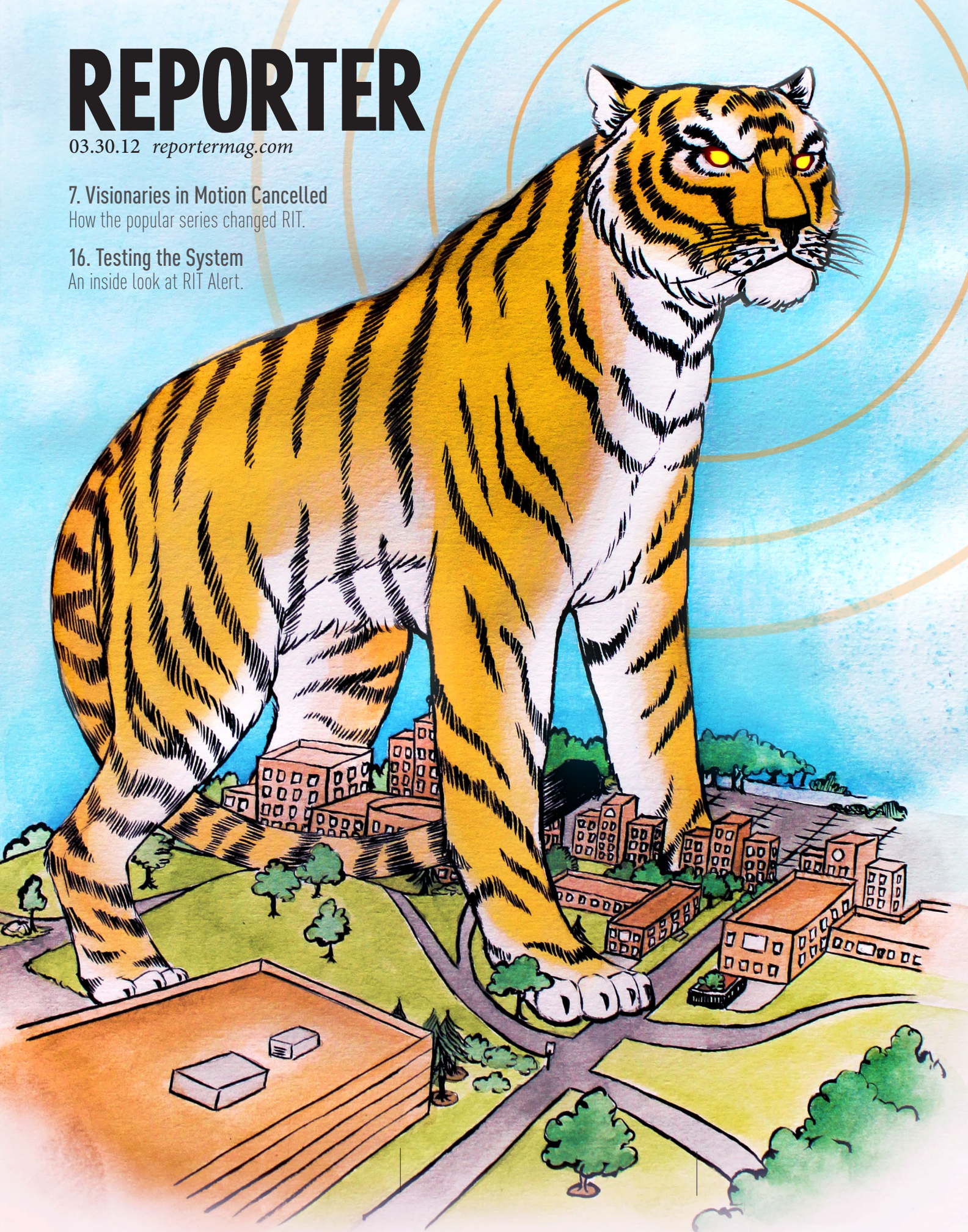
03.30.12 reportermag.com

7. Visionaries in Motion Cancelled

How the popular series changed RIT.

16. Testing the System

An inside look at RIT Alert.



REPORTER

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RED ALERT

“Something has got to hold it together. I’m saying my prayers to Elmer, the Greek god of glue.”

– Tom Robbins, “Still Life with Woodpecker”

Brace yourselves; registration is coming.

At last Friday’s Student Government meeting (SG), Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar Joe Loffredo presented an update on GeneSIS, the school’s new student information system (See “SG Update” on page 5.). With a planned Monday, April 9 launch, the system will take effect for fall quarter registration later next month.

The new system has got some seriously impressive perks. There’s an advanced course search and even a shopping cart to store multiple potential class lists. And with its appointment system, a generation of students may never have to brave RIT’s dreaded 6 a.m. registrations.

Sporting a laundry list of enticing features, GeneSIS has the potential to hit it out of the park. However it doesn’t, and that’s what’s disappointing: While the system’s bells and whistles are highly appealing, it ultimately fails to provide the same basic amenities as its 33-year-old predecessor.

The need for an upgrade is clear. According to Loffredo, RIT installed its current system in 1979. Over the years, administrators have found creative ways to patch the aging system into RIT’s growing infrastructure. With those capable of supporting its legacy hardware reaching retirement age, it’s an unsustainable model. And with the semester system on the horizon, there was really no better time to upgrade.

My problem comes with the project team’s apparent reluctance to customize the software, a fact Loffredo himself criticized. Though the reason was not readily apparent at last Friday’s meeting, the Institute’s implementation of GeneSIS is default in every way — straight out of the box with no customizations.

I don’t care that the system’s interface is white and purple — one superficial complaint leveled at SG last week. I’m more concerned with its functionality. There’s no easy way to simply browse classes; you’re forced to use the program’s search function. And while it is nicely designed, it’s not appropriate in every situation.

The default class view is also confusing, and it lists a series of cryptic alphabetic codes in addition to the current numeric ones. Designed for use after semester conversion, they will display nothing for the next year. Even worse, in my opinion, there’s no way of choosing to display classes in a specific college.

I understand it’s a work in progress. Even when it’s done, there will still be a learning curve. What angers me is the project’s apparent priority on cutting-edge “convenience” over core functionality. In my three years here, I have seen the Institute work at integrating the aging SIS into a growing campus. With a newer, far more customizable system, it appears they have failed to take even simple conveniences into consideration.

I applaud RIT for taking the initiative to replace SIS, and I especially appreciate Loffredo’s forthrightness with its shortcomings. It takes balls to stand in front of an audience and admit your project’s shortcomings. And while I feel the team will likely address these concerns in time, I urge them to consider them up front. You’ve got an incredible piece of software; use it to your full potential.

As for my fellow students, your best weapon is knowledge. Read up on GeneSIS. Check out the training literature the project has posted online or visit the system itself. Educate yourself so that fall registration goes as smoothly as possible. In the end, though, you shouldn’t have to. That’s the core problem I see in the current project’s approach: It treats education alone, rather than preventive action, as the fix for the system’s flaws.

Alex Rogala

EDITOR IN CHIEF

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| photograph by William Ingalls

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cover illustration by Amber Gartung

SERIAL FRENCH GUNMAN KILLED BY POLICE

On Thursday, March 22, French police killed Mohammed Merah, a 23-year-old man suspected of murdering three children, a rabbi and three soldiers over a period of eight days around the city of Toulouse.

Merah, who would ride up to schoolyards on a motorbike and open fire, was motivated by extreme anti-Semitism. He began a standoff from a house, which lasted for two days. Two policemen were shot and wounded during the standoff, and French police forces set off explosives around the home in an attempt to drive Merah out. Police also brought his mother to the house in an attempt to convince him to surrender.

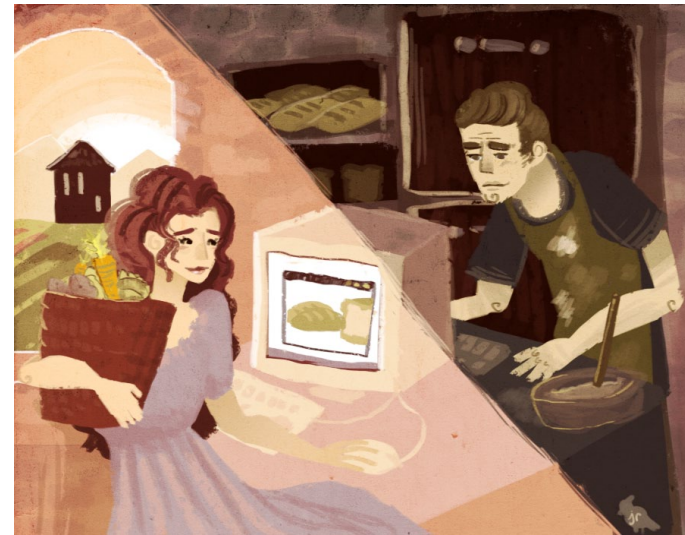
Their attempts were unsuccessful, and the effort to take the killer into custody culminated in a SWAT team rushing the house. When the police began entering the house, Merah leaped to the ground from a balcony, and began firing indiscriminately until French police shot him in the head.

CALIFORNIA FIRES THOUSANDS OF TEACHERS

On Thursday, March 15, over 20,000 California teachers were told that they would not be returning to work in the fall.

As the state consistently fails to balance its budget, Governor Jerry Brown has decided to drain money from education funding in an attempt to get spending under control. The governor plans to cut another \$4.8 billion from next year's budget, which could cause another 55,000 educators to lose their jobs — unless voters decide to voluntarily raise taxes to make up the difference. Public outrage over the firings is alive and growing, with demonstrations at 60 schools in 40 different cities. Three San Leandro, Calif. high school students held a week-long hunger strike to draw attention to the issue. After education watchdog group Educate Our State launched a letter-writing campaign in protest of the cuts, over 1,500 letters were written and sent out over the course of the campaign's first six hours.

GREECE SWITCHES TO BARTER SYSTEM



Over the past year and a half, the Greek economy has been in a state of perpetual decline; in many communities, there simply isn't enough cash to go around. In response, websites have emerged dedicated to digital alternative currency, which can be used to exchange goods and services locally.

Designed to help local economies flourish without cash, one website, Local Alternative Units, uses a digital currency called "tems" to assign values to the bartered goods. People exchange tems on the website, then meet to exchange the good or service offline. In order to foster continued trade and discourage hoarding, each account is limited to holding 1,200 tems at any time. Especially popular at open-air markets, at least 15 widespread barter systems such as this have appeared in the country.

In order to support these surging local economies, the Greek parliament granted these exchange networks non-profit status, to help them pay fewer taxes and allow local economies to be built back up and continue on the road to recovery. **R**

GeneSIS UPDATE

Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and Registrar Joe Loffredo discussed the replacement for the current Student Information System (SIS) at the Friday, March 23 Student Government meeting. GeneSIS, which is scheduled to replace SIS on April 9, will utilize Oracle's PeopleSoft Campus Solutions application to manage student and class records. After approximately a year of work on the new system, explains Loffredo, GeneSIS will eliminate many of the stand-alone shadow systems that currently make up SIS. The change will update the current 33-year-old student records collection.

Accompanying GeneSIS will be conversions of all student records to the updated system — beginning March 29 — as well as several new features. Students will have 24/7 access to GeneSIS, as opposed to SIS's unavailability from midnight to 7 a.m.. A shopping cart feature will allow students advance planning of course schedules, with the option to create multiple alternative schedules to make registration a smoother process.

However, several features of SIS are not integrated into the new system: a class waiting list will replace Unmet Needs. The planned setup does not allow for priority seating into full classes that become open, and will be awarded on a first-come, first served basis. The waiting list also prohibits upperclassmen from holding spots for underclassmen. GeneSIS will not incorporate the use of a GPA calculator for anticipated class grades pending further updates.

The dates on which students are allowed early registration will stay in place; however, registration will now be conducted using Registration Appointments. One hundred and fifty students will be randomized into 30-minute blocks when they are allowed to begin registration with no set registration priorities.

GeneSIS will be used for Fall 2012 registration beginning April 24. Further updates on GeneSIS can be found on the project website (<http://rit.edu/genesis>). **R**

FRIDAY 30

Technical Grounds Breakdance Competition

George H. Clark Gymnasium (CLK, 03). 7 p.m. — 12 a.m.

So you think you can dance? Prove it at the third-annual breakdancing competition, hosted by CAB.

Cost: Students: Free, Public: \$5, Registration: \$10.

SATURDAY 31

Multicultural Day

Lobby, Student Alumni Union. 9 a.m. — 5 p.m.

Each culture has its own unique food, attire and way of life; this festival aims to celebrate just that. Cost: Free.

SUNDAY 01

"The Bartered Bride"

Kodak Hall at Eastman Theatre, 26 Gibbs St. 2 — 5 p.m.

This uplifting, classic Czech story about the power of love in the face of arranged marriage will be performed for one weekend only as part of a special opera performance. Cost: \$15 - \$35.

MONDAY 02

Chariot Race

Underneath Bridge by Gordon Field House. 4 — 5 p.m. To kick off its Greek Week celebration, the Greek Programming Board is hosting a human-powered chariot race around campus. Cost: Free.

TUESDAY 03

The Tournées French Film Festival: "A Prophet"

Golisano Auditorium, Golisano Hall (GOL, 70), 6:30 — 9:30 p.m.

This critically-acclaimed film tells the story of a young French-Arab criminal's life during his stay in prison. Cost: Free

WEDNESDAY 04

Options for Quitting Smoking

Room 1000, Campus Center. 12 — 1 p.m. Do you feel like your smoking has become a problem? Do you think you need to change your habits? This seminar will provide the information you need to get started. Cost: Free.

THURSDAY 05

RIT Potluck

Room 1600, Center for Student Innovation (CSI, 87). 12 — 1:30 p.m. Pretty much everyone knows about the food available at RIT, but those who don't go off-campus much may not be aware of dining options in the town nearby. Come to discuss places to eat, and take part in a mini-feast! Cost: Food to share. **R**

WOMEN'S HOCKEY MOVES TO DIVISION I

by Peter LoVerso

RIT Women's Hockey has been celebrating this past week, and rightfully so: They just won the NCAA Division III title for the first — and last — time. On Tuesday, March 20, only a few days after winning the championship, RIT officials announced that the team would be moving up to Division I for the 2012-2013 season, and for the foreseeable future.

Commissioner Robert DeGregorio of College Hockey America, a conference Women's Hockey will now compete in, says he expects the team to hold its own ground and be immediately competitive: "We are very excited to have RIT join College Hockey America," DeGregorio said. "They have had a very successful women's ice hockey program at the Division III level, and it is only fitting for them to elevate their women's program to Division I."

RIT President Bill Destler agrees: "We've been ultra-competitive at Division III. It's time to take the next challenge."

The RIT Women's Hockey team joins the Men's Hockey team as the only Division I teams in Rochester. The spot for the RIT team opened as Niagara, a former member of the D1 conference, announced it would be dropping its women's hockey program. The RIT team is permitted to be fully involved for the next season, and will be playing 20 conference games with the other five members. There will be two home and two away games with each other member. The RIT team had been expecting to play an independent schedule, and considers this a bonus.

This past year, RIT Women's Hockey finished the season with a 28-1-1 record, which set the Division III record for most wins in a single season. **R**

GEORGE HOTZ ARRESTED FOR MARIJUANA POSSESSION

by Steven Markowitz

Infamous 22-year-old hacker and former RIT student George Hotz was arrested in Sierra Blanca, Texas on Wednesday, March 14 for felony possession of marijuana. Hotz currently holds a medical marijuana license in the state of California; however, he was on his way to the South by Southwest festival in Texas, where carrying the substance is illegal.

He was caught with one fourth ounces of the drug and one eighth of an ounce of chocolate containing marijuana in his glove compartment. Law enforcement valued the whole weight of chocolate as marijuana, valuing the brick of the drug at \$800. Hotz was charged with the felony, and later posted the \$1,500 bail.

In September 2007, Hotz attended RIT as a Biotechnology-Bioinformatics major, but dropped out after a little over one quarter. Earlier that year, he had gained international fame after becoming the first person to jailbreak the iPhone.

In January 2010, Hotz announced he had successfully hacked the Sony PlayStation 3, thought to be the most secure gaming console, and released the hack to the public. Sony took action, suing Hotz and filing a temporary restraining order against him. After a year-long lawsuit and much outrage from the hacking community, Hotz and Sony settled in April 2011 under the condition that Hotz not hack any future Sony products.

Despite Hotz's disreputable perception among companies, he was hired as a software engineer by the technical department of Facebook last spring; however, he quit the job earlier this year.

With the arrest, Hotz joins Snoop Dogg and Willie Nelson on the list of celebrities arrested at that specific checkpoint at the festival. **R**

VISIONARIES IN MOTION CANCELLED HOW THE POPULAR SERIES CHANGED RIT

by Steven Markowitz

photographs by CoCo Walters, Emma Tannabaum, Jonathan Foster, Neal Danis, William Ingalls and Harry Yatkowitz

The crowd was enthralled as Stefan Sagmeister, famous graphic designer, author and speaker presented a challenge to the packed Ingle Auditorium: Touch someone's life with design. After the speech, he worked individually with students to help them accomplish this goal.

Making this presentation in 2009, Sagmeister was just one of the many talented speakers involved in RIT's Visionaries in Motion project.

The series began in 2006 as an effort to bring expert speakers to RIT to discuss timely topics that emphasize Institute goals. In only four years, the project's popularity among the community earned it the "Best Lecture Series in the Rochester Area" award by City Magazine. However, after six successful years, the series was cancelled late last year by administration.

The committee in charge of putting on the event — which consists of seven professors from a variety of departments and one student — has received no official explanation for why the series was cancelled, but suspects funding was an issue.

There will be no speakers for the following year, and as of now there are no plans to revitalize the project. The committee will continue to maintain their website with all the lectures intact as an archive and a resource for the school.

"[Visionaries in Motion] has set such a high benchmark that we hope whatever comes after it can live up to what we did," said Mary Lynn Broe, RIT's Caroline Werner Gannett professor of Humanities. In March 2006, Broe was appointed head of the Caroline Werner Gannett Project and given the task of exploring how science and technology coincide in relation to the many multidisciplinary and continually evolving fields promoted at RIT.

Broe's first goal was to establish a personal relationship with each speaker. To accomplish this, the committee does not use agents, nor do they schedule speakers on a book tour or as part of a publicity stunt. "We develop and care about our relationship with the speakers," said Broe.

The close relationships established with the speakers encourage them to interact with students. In fact, many of the speakers talk one-on-one with students and lecture for various classes. Additionally, they are often willing to be interviewed by WXXI, WTR, **REPORTER** and other media or student organizations.

The candidates must be multidisciplinary in their field. "We look for people who are not episodically brilliant, but constantly visionary," said Gary Skuse, professor of Biological Sciences, and a member of the committee. Once a candidate agrees, the committee starts getting to know the person one-on-one, and while members of the committee admit this process is harder, they consider it much more gratifying.

According to the series' advisory board, it continues to be ahead of the curve in bringing in visionaries, each year bringing in two to three McArthur Award-winning speakers, who have received the accolade for showing innovation and creativity in their respective fields. From Dr. Esther Conwell — a 90-year-old physicist and 2010 National Medal of Science winner — to Elizabeth Streb — a dancer and choreographer whose troupe combines dancing and engineering to study the human body — the series strives for the leaders, and year after year succeeds at drawing a crowd.

The series will conclude Wednesday, May 2. While members of the committee are disappointed, they express pride in the popularity the series has gained and the impact that the speakers have had as they brought RIT and the Rochester community together to hear about the future of science, technology, art and every combination of the three. **R**

*Editor's Note: Mary Lynn Broe currently sits on a board of RIT administrators and faculty that oversees **REPORTER**.*



September 20, 2006
Dr. Eugenie C. Scott
Anthropologist



September 17, 2008
Raymond Kurzweil
Author



April 4, 2011
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Author



April 18, 2011
Dr. David Brainbridge
Reproductive Biologist



February 2, 2012
Dr. Sebastian Seung
Computational Neuroscientist



March 15, 2012
Charles Burns
Illustrator

UMBRELLAGATE

AFTER THE SCARE

by Nolan Harris Jr. | illustration by Shin Wakabayashi



If you are part of the 63 percent of students who have registered to receive messages from RIT Alert — our campus' Emergency Mass Notification system — you probably received an ominous phone call or text message the morning of Friday, March 16: "Shelter in Place. Person allegedly with a rifle spotted outside Kate Gleason Hall."

Earlier that morning, a Regional Transit Service (RTS) bus driver spotted a student carrying a samurai-sword-handled umbrella in his backpack, but alerted the police after mistaking it for a rifle. What would follow over the next hour were repeated messages and updates from RIT Alert, advising students, faculty and staff: "Shelter in place — STAY indoors. Lock or barricade doors. Nathaniel Rochester Hall or Kate Gleason Hall residents."

There were erroneous updates on social media — including one tweeted under the #RIT hashtag claiming, "MAN WITH GUN, REFUSING TO COMPLY, PERPETRATOR ON FOOT RUNNING NORTH, CANINE UNIT BEING DEPLOYED." There was even a live breaking news spot on CNN.

"I WAS KIND OF HALF-ASLEEP, HONESTLY. THEY LITERALLY **PULLED ME OUT OF BED, IN MY BOXERS,** AND PUT HANDCUFFS ON ME"

Ultimately, RIT Public Safety and the Monroe County Sheriff's Office would successfully identify and locate the purported gunman — a first year photography student — in his dorm room, and would ascertain that the "rifle" was no more than a collectible umbrella. Public Safety confiscated the item, and will return it to the owner at the end of the academic year.

Overall, local media outlets report that the campus community was, on the whole, pleased with the management of the incident: "The bus driver did everything he was supposed to do by alerting Public Safety," says RIT spokesman Paul Stella. Many students allegedly agreed: "False alarm or not, they say they appreciated the alerts," reported 13 WHAM's Angela Hong.

However, for first year Fine Art Photography major Caleb Statser — roommate of the umbrella-bearer — the reporting may have been a little too congratulatory. In the search for the alleged gunman, Statser was mistakenly taken to be the suspect and briefly detained by the Monroe County Sheriff's Office after they entered his room:

"I was kind of half-asleep, honestly. They literally pulled me out of bed, in my boxers, and put handcuffs on me," says Statser, "There was me, in my

boxers, and a bunch of guys with assault rifles and combat shotguns."

Ironically, Statser says his roommate was in the next room over when the authorities came in: "He told me later he heard them burst into [the] room."

Statser does report that after the misidentification was discovered, authorities apologized for the mix-up and took some personal information. Later, a Center for Residence Life representative also came to offer an apology.

That the honest misidentification went largely unreported is Statser's only qualm with RIT's management of the incident: "[The reports] didn't say anything about the fact that before [the authorities] got [the student they were searching for], they pulled some other kid out of bed and handcuffed him, and I figured, at least, that people should know," he says.

Thus, while the overall assessment of the response has been relatively positive, there is always room for improvement — a point that Assistant Vice President for Global Risk Management Services John Zink noted in an interview. "We have learned a few things that could [have been] done differently, and we are looking into [them]," said Zink. "This is an opportunity for us to look at what happened, see what worked well, [and maybe] see what could be improved upon, and then take those steps necessary to improve the things we can improve."

For instance, social media presented a challenge for communication during the alert because of misinformation spread in the heat of the emergency: "With social media [and] as many students as we have, it can be very hard to stay out in front of that, and it can result in misinformation being out there," Zink observed.

Thus, Zink advises that "in any emergency on campus, pay attention to the website [and] watch for Message Center — you're going to get the most accurate information there."

Even with the challenges of mobilizing a massive, rapid response to an emergency situation, Zink notes: "Overall, if you consider that the entire situation lasted just over an hour, in [which] time, we were able to communicate with over 16,000 people, a total of over 83,000 messages went out ... a lot happened in that hour."

Zink also praised Public Safety's skill in identifying and locating the student within a very short period of time, having only a phoned-in description and an unidentifiable video shot of the student — feats not easily accomplished on a campus consisting of almost 18,000 students.

"Every response will have its unique characteristics," says Zink. "And you just have to manage through those and do the best that you can." **R**

TO REGISTER FOR RIT ALERTS, VISIT

<http://finweb.rit.edu/buscont/massnotification.html>

GIVE US A RING

585.672.4840

AYL | AT YOUR LEISURE

by Evan Williams

QUOTE

“Don’t go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. **It was here first.**”

– Mark Twain

OVERSEEN & OVERHEARD

“You should be a fine art photographer so you can just sit in your room and take pictures of your dick all day.”

– Evident fan of dicks and fine arts.

WORD OF THE WEEK

ELEUTHEROPHOBIA : n. Fear of freedom.

After five and a half years of college, Daniel thought his fear of change was holding him back from graduating, but in reality it was his

eleutherophobia.

COMIC by Amber Gartung



REPORTER RECOMENDS

Late Night Library Adventures

There’s a magic hour in the Wallace Library (WAL, 05), between when the hard workers burn out and the maniacs get kicked out. Somewhere between 11 p.m. and 3 a.m., an odd ambiance settles on the upper three floors, where the few people there are so absorbed in their work that the silence sits like a blanket. The setting is pensive, peaceful — perfect.

The only thing better than a good nook is a good cranny. And Building 5 is full of them. Stacks of filing cabinets, rear staircases, plate windows overlooking campus, even a weird archive cage that looks like the Velociraptor paddock from Isla Nublar. And with almost no authority figures anywhere above the main floor, there’s no end to the shenanigans that you could get into.

Hide and seekers could get lost for days. Photographers and filmmakers have all the settings and backdrops they could ever need. And for the more adventurous late-nighters, few things are as exhilarating as getting frisky with a partner in some obscure stack of encyclopedias, or exposing yourself to a moonlit campus from the fourth floor window. So grab some coffee, and go get all sorts of familiar with old Wally’s nether regions.

STREAM OF FACTS

The precursors to April Fools’ Day were the Roman festival of Hilaria, held March 25th, and the Medieval Festival of Fools, held December 28th. December 28th is still a day to watch out for pranks in any Spanish-speaking *country*.

The *country* of Afghanistan has a known Jewish population of one. His name is Zabalon Simintov and he is the caretaker of the *only* synagogue in Kabul.

Not *only* is Keanu Reeves totally radical, he’s also incredibly generous. After the filming of “The Matrix”, he gave approximately \$75 million of the \$110 million he made from starring in the film to the special effects team. Each senior member of the effects and costume teams became a millionaire because of Reeves’ *gift*.

The best *gift* you could give an avid horror movie fan is a trip to the Atlanta Zombie Apocalypse, a 100,000 square foot haunted house attraction that allows participants to fight their way through a live-action zombie siege and even shoot the zombies with paintball guns.

HAIKU

It’s short shorts season,

But remember this one rule:

Don’t get caught staring. 📺

FREE

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ADVANTAGE
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



REVIEWS

3 · 30 · 12

“THE HUNGER GAMES”

by Brett Slabaugh



Movie | Action/Drama
| 142 mins.

SKIP IT

“The Hunger Games”, based on the book series by Suzanne Collins, is the newest film adaptation of a wildly popular novel. To those who like it, it’s the next “Harry Potter.” To those who don’t, it’s the next “Twilight.” So what it all comes down to is, is this silver screen blockbuster worth your attention?

The movie tells the story of Katniss Everdeen, a teenage girl living in the slums of a dystopian future. When she finds herself as a contestant in a televised fight to the death against 23 other teens, her survival skills are put to the test. The film’s plot stays true to the novel, with only a couple minor changes.

This faithfulness to the source material is both impressive and problematic. While fans of the book will appreciate the movie’s attention to detail, outsiders will be left scratching their heads at times. Without the benefit of first-person narration, the audience can’t see what’s going on in Katniss’ head — unfortunate, since one of the highlights of the book was her pragmatic mentality. The film tries to make up for this by periodically cutting to events outside the Games, but it doesn’t quite make up for the lost depth.

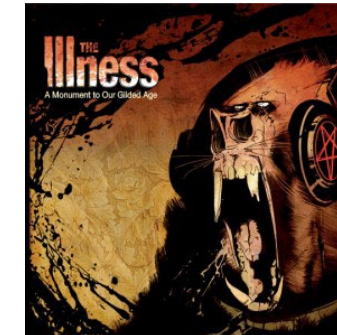
Cinematically, the film is decent — the luxurious Capitol is appropriately extravagant, but the locale of the Games themselves is dismayingly unremarkable. Action sequences are intense but poorly executed, going overboard with shaky handheld shots and severely lacking in shot-to-shot continuity. This is unfortunate, as the film rushes to hit all the book’s action scenes, skipping a lot of exposition and leaving the setting’s captivating post-apocalyptic world woefully undefined.

If you’re a fan of the novels, you’ve probably already seen the movie by now and loved it. This seems to be the goal — the film is good when you can fill in the blanks that it skims over. To newcomers, however, the rapid pace and weak development may leave you hungering for a better movie. **R**

Instead look for: “Battle Royale,” “The Road,” “The Running Man”

“A MONUMENT TO OUR GILDED AGE” BY THE ILLNESS

by William Hirsh



Album | Progressive Metal
| 56 mins.

DIG IT

“A Monument to Our Gilded Age” is a must-listen album for anyone who has ever flirted with the metal genre. Formed in San Francisco, Calif., this is The Illness’ first swing at a full-length album. A whirlwind of constantly fluctuating chord progressions throughout each song, the band’s hybridization of typical metal strumming with more progressive rock tinged guitar riffs really serves to differentiate them from today’s other metal outfits.

“Lengua De La Murte” is the album’s benchmark song, encapsulates the band’s sound. Listeners are greeted with a brief heavy metal riff that dissolves into mild, dreamy progressive guitar, slowly descending into The Illness’ visceral realm; not wanting to escape. This effective mix of progressive and metal sensibilities is where The Illness succeed over many, and is often the album’s greatest appeal.

Beyond that, vocals have a warm, smooth quality that can only be described as a cross between Alice in Chains and Slayer. Especially evident in the album’s namesake song, the unlikely cross serves to better The Illness’ overall sound.

The same, however, can’t be said for the lyrics. Often overshadowed by the blending vocals and deafening guitar, the lyrics of each song on “Monument to Our Gilded Age” are relatively ho-hum and don’t exactly overstep their genre boundaries. Except for the more politically-angled tunes “Take a Number” and “Defenestration,” many of the other songs instead opt for more traditional metal lyrics. Going forward, The Illness could benefit by injecting more social commentary into their songs.

Overall, “A Monument to Our Gilded Age” is an excellent first album for the fledgling progressive metal band. With a little more lyrical focus, the Illness’ sound could spread to many by the end of the year. **R**

For fans of: Alice in Chains, Coheed and Cambria, Slayer

REPORTER

Beyond Hollywood: The Tournées Film Festival



by Evan Williams

Talking to a film snob about foreign film is a lot like talking to the “wine guy” at the supermarket about Cabernet Sauvignon versus Zinfandel: You’ll realize very quickly that most of what they’re saying is crap, and the urge to smack them across the face will be stronger than your urge to breathe. But alas, you’ll suppress it and listen to them ramble about Fellini and Bergman, and how they’d rather watch adorable baby turtles be de-shelled than a Judd Apatow film.

But with the wide world of film outside our borders, things quickly become more complicated that name-dropping a few impressionist directors. But with the arrival of the Tournées French Film Festival on campus this month, presented by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultures, the picture of what you can learn about different cultures through film becomes a bit clearer.

The festival, in its 16th year, is sponsored by the French American Cultural Exchange and works to bring the best contemporary French films to over 350 universities and 450,000 students across the nation. The series’ first film, shown March 20, was “Hadewijch.” A dark and serious film, it tells the story of a young nun expelled from her covent,

many films are more willing to take artistic and financial risks than in Hollywood. The French government isn’t trying to make a profit; they just need to make their money back. But, by this same token, epics and effects-heavy films are made much less frequently, because they are expensive. This financial restraint in itself is a cultural element of French cinema.

Chavasse says that most French audiences enjoy comedies like the wildly popular “Le Diner de Cons,” which was later adapted for American audiences as “Dinner for Schmucks.” In his class, students must examine American remakes of French films from across the years are examined, and they regularly pick up several differences. “There are certain moral codes that, when you have a French film remade by Hollywood, Hollywood will censor,” he explains.

Chavasse notes the fluidity of gender roles present in French films versus the stereotypical representations in American films, the more serious nature of police as authority figures in American remakes and the tendency to stay away from happy endings in French originals. He considers the latter part of a political-realist tradition in French

“It’s representative of a more avant-garde type of cinema. It really pushes the limits of film.”



who befriends a rebellious Arab teen and his devoutly religious older brother. In many ways, it both exemplifies and contradicts cultural and artistic elements of French cinema.

Dr. Philippe Chavasse is an associate professor of French and teaches “French Films and Hollywood.” After listening to audience reactions to “Hadewijch,” he observed some of the student reactions. “The film is probably the extreme of French cinema, being difficult to understand,” he explains. “It’s representative of a more avant-garde type of cinema. It really pushes the limits of film.” Chavasse explains that “Hadewijch,” like many French films, has a tendency to make abrupt edits between scenes, stressing the continuity and forcing audiences to be active in piecing together elements of the story. Certain elements of French culture were displayed realistically in “Hadewijch,” such as the friction between Christians and Muslims. At the same time, some characters’ actions are too extreme to be realistic. “In this way it’s not representative of the culture, but that’s not the point,” says Chavasse. “He’s trying to make a statement.”

Because the French film industry is subsidized by the government,

cinema that bucks the need for a pleasant resolution. “When happy endings are integrated in French films, it is done in a French way,” he says with a smile. These variations between remakes are perhaps the most accurate depictions of cultural differences between countries. “You do have patterns like this that are telling about the culture,” Chavasse says. “It’s interesting to start reflecting about that.”

Knowledge often comes with a sort of regressive cycle. The more you learn about a subject, the more you realize how much more there is to learn. In short, the more you know, the more you know you don’t know. The complexity of French cinema is a prime example. But the best way to further your understanding is to dive right in and see for yourself. Enjoy the show. **B**

The Tournées French Film Festival will continue through April 19, with the next film being “A Prophet” on Tuesday, April 3, at 6:30 p.m.

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SOFTBALL

RIT Softball Field | vs. Skidmore

APRIL 21

BASEBALL

RIT Baseball Field | vs. Clarkson

MEN'S LACROSSE

RIT Field | vs. Skidmore

APRIL 27

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

RIT Field | vs. William Smith



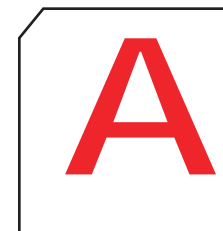
**Event locations
subject to change*



TESTING THE SYSTEM

AN INSIDE LOOK AT RIT ALERT

by Danielle Delp



At 8:20 a.m. on Friday, March 16, it was business as usual. I was struggling to stay awake amidst a regular, everyday physics lecture. At that moment, phones hidden away in backpacks sprang to life, announcing RIT was under lockdown. In a flash, most of the class' attention was diverted from the lecture to smartphones and

laptops; they were checking communication and news networks to try and piece together as much information about what was going on as they could. They soon discovered more notifications from the alert system waiting for them in their RIT email accounts to supplement the text messages and calls they had already received. Through phone and internet, this process of information distribution continued for roughly an hour, until a final mass notification was sent announcing the emergency's resolution. Fortunately, the "gunman" spoken of in the updates turned out to be nothing more than an innocent student with an unusually-shaped umbrella.

The story is common knowledge by now. Numerous media outlets reported on the progression of events, how it was handled and who was involved with the investigation. But what forces were at work behind the scenes, keeping students updated on the situation and managing the emergency response procedures?

A WELL-OILED MACHINE

Lynn Daley, Director of Business Continuity, shed some light on the inner workings of RIT Alert, the Institute's Emergency Mass Notification system; she was part of the duo that designed the current system. Prior to their version of RIT Alert, the Institute only had plans to deal with emergency situations directly, without a means to communication with the student body. Collectively called the National Incident Management System (NIMS), these plans were adopted by most university, state and governmental organizations following the World Trade Center attacks on September 11, 2001.

This standardized system forms the foundation from which the Institute deals with problems. It exists in two varieties, and which one is used depends on whether the campus is experiencing an emergency. During non-emergency situations, it forms a chain of command tasked with managing the university's day-to-day security measures. During emergencies, this chain is modified into a Critical Incident Management Team (CMIT) to accommodate the situation. Some people remain in a similar position to their non-emergency states, the duties of others are altered and some are moved to completely new positions.

From the beginning, the NIMS eliminated any guesswork involved in critical situations. "There's no question of who does what," explained

dangerous situations. Daley arranged the system in such a way that messages can be sent to a few specific people or everybody, depending on who needs what information, and how those messages are delivered. It can deliver custom warnings, like that of the "gunman," or a wide range of presets designed for everything from fires to floods.

In the event of a potential threat, the process begins when any party receives an emergency call in regards to an event on RIT's campus. All such messages are immediately forwarded to Public Safety, including 911 calls. As first responders, it falls to Public Safety to determine whether or not a campus emergency should be declared. If it is, they must take steps towards isolating the hazardous area and neutralizing the threat. The alert system may be activated, and local law enforcement may be called to assist. Meanwhile, it falls to the CMIT to ensure that information is distributed calmly and effectively through RIT Alert. They must also ensure that any media representatives who come to investigate are kept at a safe distance so they don't interfere and are not put in danger. They will monitor social media networks constantly to ensure that all information being spread online is accurate. This process is maintained until, like in the case of the umbrella, the trouble has passed.

A SYSTEM UNDER TRIAL

Communication is the key to the system's success. During the emergency, however, it proved the biggest challenge. Communication errors, confusing messages and unclear emergency plans resulted in a certain degree of confusion amongst students and faculty. Some professors' reactions to the alert demonstrated this ambiguity. While the majority detained students in classrooms until the alert was called off, some

students simply as "Gleason Hall." Daley was the one sending out the messages at the time, and had to send out a clarification message later on after she realized the confusion.

Most serious, however, was the number of students, staff and faculty around campus didn't receive any kind of alert messages during the incident. Only 63 percent of students are signed up for the alert system, but others who should have been on the alert list mysteriously heard nothing as well. Daley has been working since then to revise the contacts on the list to guarantee that everyone involved in a potential emergency has the information they need to stay safe. She also intends to add other workers on campus, such as the chaplains from the Center for Religious Life, who are not listed as faculty despite being present around campus during most of the day.

LOOKING AHEAD

The team managing the alert system views the umbrella incident as a valuable means to expose its flaws and weaknesses. "This was a blessing for us," remarked Daley "It allowed us to run through our paces without anyone getting hurt." It was only the second large-scale use of the alert system in a fast-paced, emergency situation.

“The primary goal for all of RIT’s emergency response plans is the safety of those who live, work and learn in the Brick City.”

Now aware of just how little emergency protocol students and faculty are familiar with, Daley is also working to develop building- and room-specific plans. She describes it as a, "Here's what you do, if..." plan. It would be customized so that, for example, a student in a chemistry lab in Gosnell Hall knows exactly where they need to go and what they need to do. Daley wants to make this vital safety information actively available by instructing faculty beforehand on the actions they are to take. She notes that the problem with how some professors reacted was mostly due to the general instructions for emergency action are only available passively online, with no training system in place to feed the information directly to the people who might need it.

The primary goal for all of RIT's emergency response plans is the safety of those who live, work and learn in the Brick City. In one of its first major test runs, it proved somewhat effective, but also exposed some very real communication problems that could have turned catastrophic had the umbrella man really been a gunman. Daley and her crew intend to continuously pursue improvements to the system to prepare for anything. After all, an emergency is something that strikes without warning — the best chance to avoid a tragedy is to ensure that most possible setbacks are identified and accounted for. With a little luck and a lot of work, RIT Alert and the forces behind it may be more prepared for the next challenge that happens to blow their way. ■

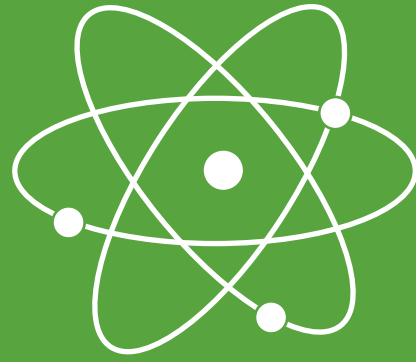
“Not long after the Institute declared an emergency situation, it became apparent to Daley and her co-workers that the messages and instructions they were broadcasting may not have been clear enough.”

Daley. "That's what always takes forever [in emergencies]." By having a pre-established set of trained people, the most appropriate ones for the job can be put on the case. All in all, about 120 campus personnel are trained to step up as members of the team if they are determined to be the best choice to take command.

The RIT Alert system, however, is a relatively recent addition to the response plans. There had been talk of eventually implementing a high-tech information distribution system to supplement NIMS, but no real initiative to do it until the Virginia Tech shootings on April 16, 2007, made apparent the value of keeping students in the loop during

simply told students to leave once class was over. This decision was heavily criticized in the aftermath of the incident as, in the event of a real threat, it could have endangered students' lives.

Not long after the Institute declared an emergency situation, it became apparent to Daley and her co-workers that the messages and instructions they were broadcasting may not have been clear enough. The original message, for example, warned of the potential gunman's presence in Kate Gleason Hall (KGH, 35), a residence hall. James E. Gleason Hall (GLE, 09), an academic building housing the Kate Gleason College of Engineering, shares a similar name, and both buildings are commonly known to



REAL-WORLD SCIENCE

HOW ONE RIT PROJECT
IS CHANGING THE WAY WE
DEAL WITH DISASTERS.

by Kayla Emerson

“This is not science for science’s sake. This is science for saving lives, for improving our response capability, for training future emergency responders, or analysts, or engineers to keep that whole philosophy in mind,” says Dr. Jan van Aart, an associate professor in the Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science (CIS). This is his philosophy, and the driving force behind a project he helped create: that the things academics create must be useful. “I should always design a system with the user in mind,” he says.

In spite of its name, the Information Products Lab for Emergency Response (IPLER) is not a lab. It’s a multi-faceted project that makes the step between what technology can do and what emergency responders need. It began with a National Science Foundation Partnership for Innovation between RIT and the University of Buffalo back in 2009. The partnership combines the resources and researchers of the RIT Digital Imaging and Remote Sensing Laboratory in the Chester F. Carlson Center for Imaging Science (CIS) with the Department of Geography at Buffalo.

IPLER’s project manager, Don McKeown, is a researcher for the CIS. Before the project began in 2009, he developed the Wildfire Airborne Sensing Program. A sensor that can be bolted onto a plane and used for mapping large areas, the program is a pivotal part of IPLER. The project’s science principle investigator, van Aardt mainly studies forestry, focusing on remote sensing. The other main sensor he uses is LiDAR, a police radar-like device that can be used to make 3-D maps of the ground. First, a laser emits infrared light in pulses; then a sensor picks up the light when it returns. From this time difference, it can calculate how far away it is from the ground.

According to van Aardt, the lab uses LiDAR for digital elevation modeling, which analyses the effect of factors such as ground location and shape on things such as water flow. The project uses it for flood modeling and mapping, as well as building damage assessment. “We know roughly what a roof looks like, or what it should look like,” says van Aardt. “So if an earthquake moves through, we can use all of these million points on the ground and look for cracks in the roof.” He adds, “We can use [LiDAR] for debris assessment, like in the case of Haiti, [by seeing how much] junk in between the buildings.”

IPLER is only able to save lives by developing trust with technology companies and disaster responders alike — and it does just that.

IPLER goes beyond mapping damaged areas. It starts even before disaster strikes, by using remote sensing to understand high-risk areas. Then it aids in the response to disasters by mapping floods, fires, earthquakes and more, while relaying that information to the ground in near-real time. Then, in the weeks after a disaster, IPLER can continue to fly its WASP and LiDAR sensors over the area to monitor progress and possibly evaluate the best place to safeguard refugees while their homes recover. In this way, IPLER is comprehensive in its disaster management.

IPLER is dedicated to usability of their products and data. They want to be able to give their programs to emergency responders and say, “You don’t have to know the physics behind what’s happening, but you can use this tool: you can ingest the LiDAR data, you can click on this button, maybe set the building size parameter, and you can get out an approximate building damage assessment map,” according to van Aardt. Computer programming is an integral part of IPLER, not just in writing algorithms for their equipment and data processing, but

also in making their user interfaces as efficient and understandable as possible.

IPLER has been implemented for its share of disasters already. When a magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit Haiti Sunday, January 12, 2010, the project was contracted by ImageCat Inc., an IPLER partner, to fly over the island. They covered 250 square miles in seven days, and they made all of their maps public domain data. Since then, IPLER has flown for New York state after hurricane Irene and tropical storm Lee, with Tomnod after the New Zealand earthquake, and for the U.S. Geological Survey in data analysis after the Japanese earthquake last spring.

Jason Faulring, a CIS systems integration engineer, pilots the aircraft that holds the sensors. “Without Jason, this is not possible, literally,” says van Aardt. “Don and I can keel over and someone else can step in, but if we lose Jason then we’re in trouble.” Jason supplies some of the technical expertise behind IPLER’s missions.

Recently, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security asked IPLER to research nuclear ingestion pathway mapping. This involved developing a way to rapidly assess crop damage caused by the fallout of a nuclear reactor meltdown. They use satellite data over many years to develop a baseline map. Then, in the case of a disaster, IPLER would again fly over an area and take images, classifying areas based on how the images have changed relative to their baseline map.

According to van Aardt, the project has three short term goals: to deliver usable information to disaster responders, to educate themselves and others on the disaster process, and to demonstrate what is possible. Ultimately, the IPLER team wants to sustain the project as long as possible, and one of McKeown’s jobs is to look for grants to sustain their research. They are confident this project will save lives in

years to come, as it educates and trains the next generation of disaster responders about how to use the most recent science and technology.

This project is putting RIT on the map, so to speak, when it comes to disaster management. The project has, and is continuing, to network with both private and public sector emergency responders. McKeown and van Aardt see IPLER as a sort of middleman between two groups that otherwise wouldn’t be able to communicate as effectively: technical experts and emergency responders. IPLER is only able to save lives by developing trust with technology companies and disaster responders alike — and it does just that.

van Aardt believes the IPLER philosophy of practicality can be applied across all domains, especially the sciences. “I think we as imaging scientists lose sight of this: whatever we do needs to be transferable to an end user,” he says. “That doesn’t mean we have to dumb it down ... we just have to make it understandable.” In the case of IPLER, this usable technology saves lives.

To learn more about the IPLER project, visit their website at <http://ipler.cis.rit.edu>.

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Men's Tennis vs. Roberts Wesleyan

Improving Their Game

by Kayla Emerson | photographs by William Palmer

Prior to the Men's Tennis match on Thursday, March 22, there was some talk along the sidelines between the players, coaches and spectators about the sound of bagpipes, which rang out from somewhere nearby for the first two hours of the competition. Add the fact that the Tigers were playing in record high March temperatures of 80 degrees, and it might be fair to say that the team had many distractions during their 8-1 loss to the Roberts Wesleyan Raiders.

Working through the lengthy doubles and then singles matches, the Tigers executed their plays with precision and determination, but it was not enough as the Raiders racked up the match points. However, commenting on the attitude the team has when facing tough teams, RIT head coach Krystina Bachner says: "When they know it's a challenge, they do a good job stepping up to the plate and competing at the top notch, versus sitting back and letting the other team dictate."

Although RIT lost two of three doubles matches, fourth year Biology major Tennyson Saucedo and third year Environmental Science major Neville Bilimoria won the second-ranked doubles match 8-4. First doubles was a tight 8-6 loss. "We should've taken it," said Bachner.

Third year Environmental Science major Neville Bilimoria rests next to his opponent, German Michaylyszyn, midmatch Thursday, March 22.



Clayton Tontarski, fourth year Industrial Engineering major, in the midst of a doubles match against Roberts Wesleyan Thursday, March 22.

"They choked under pressure a little bit. [Fourth year Industrial Engineering major] Clayton Tontarski and [fourth year Mechanical Engineering major] Larry Hall ... have a really good connection, and they know how to play doubles very solid."

Despite the loss, Bachner said her team performed well. "We have a really solid lineup," she asserted as the singles matches were ending. "We put everybody in the best position that they should be in."

The Tigers lost all six of their singles matches, but the individual matches were by no means blowouts. Singles scoring in tennis dictates that whoever wins six games first wins the set, and whoever wins two out of three sets wins the match. RIT and Wesleyan pushed the top three-ranked singles matches to a third set.

While the loss was disappointing, the Tigers have improved over their last competition against the Raiders on September 10, when they lost all nine matches. Speaking lightly about the tough matches against the Raiders, Bachner says, "We play Vassar this weekend; this is a good warm-up for Vassar, because Vassar is in the Liberty League [with RIT]. It'll be a good match-up for the men's team on Sunday."

Bachner is encouraged that her team seemed more disciplined and focused this game. She says, "Now they're being more aggressive, and they're being smarter with their shots." While this didn't result in a win for the Tigers against the Raiders, it should definitely pay off in the second half of the season.

Bachner is also excited to see the growth and depth on the team this year. The players are able to recognize their mistakes and correct them, improving the play of each individual. She says this makes the team as a whole stronger, as no one or two players are more dominant than the rest — many top-ranked players on the Tigers' team have comparable skill.

The Tigers are in the middle of their first season as a member of the Liberty League and have earned a 4-5 record overall. RIT faced Vassar College on Sunday, March 25. Their next home game is against Hamilton College on Friday, March 30, at 4:00 p.m.



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Fourth year Electrical Engineering major Ryan Speciale carries the ball downfield during a 7-5 win over Clarkson University during the team's first Liberty League game Saturday, March 24, at RIT Field.

Moving UP: No. 4 Men's Lacrosse Wins First Liberty League Game

It was obvious that Tiger fans were ready to bring the heat during the Men's Lacrosse Liberty League match against the Clarkson University Golden Knights. Braving the cold and rain-covered stands, Tiger spirit boomed as fourth-ranked RIT defeated Clarkson with an iffy two point lead in what was the first game of the season where the Tigers scored below 10 points.

The opening quarter face-off gave Clarkson possession of the ball for the better half of the period. Opening with a vicious, yet futile offensive play, Clarkson started off strong and quick. The Tigers' defense stopped the Golden Knights in their tracks after third year Marketing student Elliot Cowburn scooped up a ground ball, placing the ball in RIT's possession. Taking advantage of the moment, fourth year Industrial Design major A.J. Tingle put RIT on the scoreboard with the game's first goal. After Clarkson suffered a penalty for having too many players on the field, Tingle made the assist for RIT's 2-0 lead. By the end of the first quarter, RIT lead 3-0.

In the second quarter, both teams brought their "A" games. Clarkson's defense tightened, and once again possession belonged to them most of the period. A slashing penalty was called on behalf of RIT towards the end of the quarter. During the last minutes of the first half, Golden Knight Brendon Shearin scored the first point for Clarkson and the only goal of the second quarter.

With the score 3-1 in favor of the Tigers, RIT fans become restless as the second half started off with a questionable call of unnecessary roughness by fourth year Electrical and Mechanical Engineering major Jordan Collins-Hartwig. Clarkson started off the quarter with

goal followed by a quick response by RIT, scoring their fourth point mere seconds after Clarkson. While the Tigers tightly kept on the Golden Knights, the defense across the field was loose, causing a spur of "Defense! Defense!" uproars from RIT fans. Closing the gap two point gap, Clarkson brought the score to 4-3. The two teams battled for possession for the remainder of the quarter, with RIT retaining constant possession for the first time in the game. The Tigers ended the quarter with a final goal from first year Civil Engineering major Brendan MacDonald — his second goal of the game.

Rounding up the game, Clarkson began the fourth quarter with a goal. The crowd jeered as the referee made a few questionable calls, including RIT's repossession of a ground ball, before withholding the ball from play by Clarkson. Though RIT initially regained possession of the ball before the technical foul was called, possession was given to Clarkson. After the call was made, the spirit of the riled up fans reverberated through the stands as stomping feet met aluminum stands and chants of "Tigers!" blasted through the air. Collins-Hartwig widened the score gap by two with an assist from fourth year Electrical Engineering major Ryan Speciale.

In the last five minutes of the game, RIT shoot another goal quickly followed by a goal from Clarkson. In the game's final minutes, Clarkson made a fast play for the goal that was interrupted as the Tigers took back the ball and owned it until the clock ran out. The game ended, 7-5, with the Tigers taking the number four spot in the Liberty League. Currently, Men's Lacrosse has gone undefeated with a season record of 5-0 and a Liberty League standing of 1-0. 📍

WORD ON THE STREET ***BUST A MOVE***

photographs by William Ingalls



▶ "Horse Man"
First Year Information Security and Forensics

Austin Gampher
Second Year Industrial Design



Ellie Bosies
Visitor



▶ Dom Raye
First Year Information Technology

▶ Bailey Tam
First Year Woodworking and Furniture Design

▶ John O'Bryan
Third Year Computer Engineering Technology

Jajib Debnath
First Year Computer Engineering Technology





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Your Hipster Friend is LYING

by Alex Rogala | Illustration by Zac Retz

Your ears perk at the noise — a dull thud followed by a steady crackle. Seconds later, the sound of jazz floods your apartment. “See? I told you vinyl is better,” your friend proclaims. Surveying his ironic mustache and dime store sweater, your mouth curls into a grimace. He’s lying.

It’s not his fault, however; he’s a victim of the current audio scene. For the past half-decade, vinyl sales have been on the rise. And with the arrival of “posh” headphone lines — such as Monster Beats or Skullcandy — it’s chic to care about sound. However, misinformation, misleading advertising and pervasive hipsterism have led consumers to embrace what is actually pretty poor equipment.

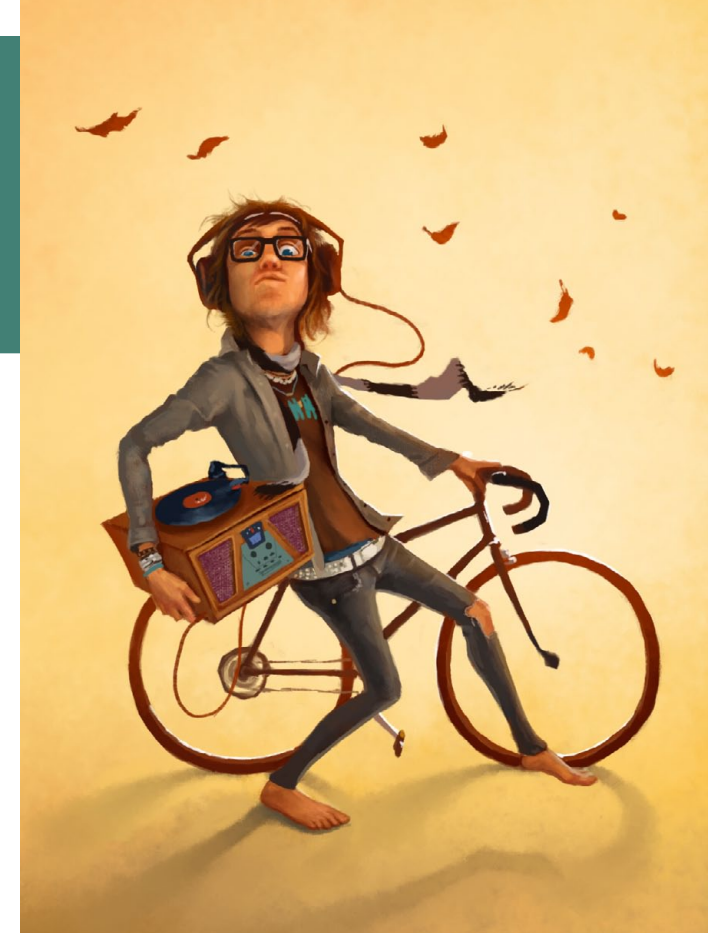
Take vinyl, for example. In 2010, 2.8 million vinyl records were sold in the United States — the highest sales figure since 1991, according to media survey company Nielsen Soundscan. This comes despite a 2.4 percent decrease in overall music sales and continues a trend of rising vinyl sales since 2007.

Many proponents of vinyl cite what they consider a warmer sound quality. Vinyl certainly can be “warmer,” a characteristic of harmonic distortion, which can be pleasing to the human ear. However, with these benefits come limitations. On vinyl, sound information is stored in a groove that spirals from the record’s edge to its center. A diamond stylus travels this pathway, decoding its sound information. However, due to the circular arrangement of vinyl, this groove has less surface area near the record’s center than at its outer edge. This means there is less space to store sound information, and as a result, sound quality suffers. Even with a cheap stylus, the first few tracks may sound stunning. By the end of each side, however, it’s far too often a distorted, abrasive mess. While better equipment, combined with careful installation, can help alleviate issues, improved sound can often cost a pretty penny.

Jumping on the bandwagon, many manufacturers have released 180-gram, “audiophile” pressings of classic titles. Compared to thinner, standard 120-gram issues, these heavy pressings are sturdier and intended to last longer. Yet their sound quality depends on how engineers “master,” or prepare the mixes for pressing, far more than the weight. If the recording and pressing are good, weight is a secondary concern.

Likewise, the headphone market has also exploded. The reason for this is clear: While definitive audiophile headphones have existed for decades, they’re often bulky or clunky. Brands such as Moshi Audio, Monster Cable (which manufactures the Beats by Dr. Dre and Lady Gaga’s Heartbeats lines) or iHip, which manufactures Snooki’s signature line, have attempted to mix aesthetics with the promise of superior sound. However, according to a Gizmodo article, some lower-end manufacturers, including Skullcandy, copy the design trends of higher-end manufacturers, but boost their profit margins by using considerably poorer electronics. The result: good looking headphones that can’t hold a tune.

The opinions expressed are solely those of the author and do not reflect the views of Reporter.



Assuming the headphones are good, what about the source? While the quality of downloads from stores such as iTunes and Amazon MP3 has improved drastically since their inception, some downloaded music — legally or illegally obtained — is of considerably poorer quality. A low quality MP3 will sound poor regardless of what it’s played on; good headphones will not help regenerate this missing sound information. In fact, these files may actually sound worse on pricey equipment that reveals their limitations. In contrast, the cheaper earbuds that ship with iPods or other similar players are designed to emphasize bass rather than treble, hiding audio artifacts in the process.

Besides, it’s likely that this perceived sound difference is in your head. According to a widely circulated forum post on Audioholics, one audiophile and 12 of his friends conducted an experiment to determine whether there was a notable difference between two expensive brands of speaker wire. Unbeknownst to them, the friend administering the test swapped out one of the cables with coat hanger wire that he had re-soldered into makeshift speaker wire. According to the poster, none of them could tell the difference. “It seems the more [audio companies] charge, the more hyped it is,” he concluded.

When choosing audio equipment, there’s only one person who can tell what’s right: you. There really is no “correct” equipment, and buying more than you need, especially when your setup does not support it, is a waste. Learning to judge for yourself, rather than following trends, could not only make you happier with your setup, but also save you quite a few bucks. Find out what you like, and do your research, but remember: You’re the only one who needs to like the sound of your system. It’s an important call; don’t let others make it for you. **Q**

RINGS!

COMPILED BY BRETT SLABAUGH
ILLUSTRATION BY SIMON JONES

585 672 4840

All calls subject to editing and truncation. Not all calls will be run.
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SUNDAY, 7:04 P.M. (FROM TEXT)

REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE TO RIT:

1. Pass the entrance exam.
2. Fail drivers ed.

THURSDAY, 5:52 P.M. (FROM TEXT)

I'm walking behind a guy **SKATEBOARDING** down the quarter mile **IN A SUPERMAN CAPE.** **SPRING MAKES PEOPLE AWESOME!**

SUNDAY, 4:45 P.M. (FROM TEXT)

Just saw a girl with a bubble wand charge someone and scream **"FOR NARNIA!"** Feels good to be back.

TUESDAY, 7:22 P.M. (FROM TEXT)

To all the **BOYS RIDING SCOOTERS** around campus: This is **WHY YOU'RE NOT GETTING LAID.** Don't blame the ratio.

MONDAY, 9:59 A.M. (FROM TEXT)

Psst, **RINGS**, don't tell Destler, but it's the first day of spring and the sky is blue.

WEDNESDAY, 9:53 A.M. (FROM TEXT)

There are three live snakes in Building 12. **JUST LAYING AROUND DOING SNAKE STUFF.**

FRIDAY, 11:15 A.M. (FROM TEXT)

I am sitting in the library, and out of 11 computers around me mine is the only Mac. **WE'RE NOT IN BUILDING 7 ANYMORE, DOROTHY.**

TUESDAY, 7:22 P.M. (FROM TEXT)

Rings! How the hell do people have **UMBRELLA ATTACK SHIRTS** three hours after the news came out?! Never underestimate the nerds' power. **R**

REGISTRATION IS CHANGING THIS SPRING.

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No more registration rage.

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